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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
7 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

DIA and State review(s)
complete

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 7
(As of 1200 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

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GENERAL

1. Israeli military forces are focusing their main efforts on the Syrian front in a concerted attempt to halt the Syrian effort to take the Golan Heights.

2. Israeli forces along the Egyptian front are fighting a holding action. The Egyptians failed to move much equipment or troops across the canal over night, but resumed movement across six bridges at dawn. The Egyptians are concentrating their efforts at crossings leading to the Mitla and Gidi passes. Egyptian forces do not appear to be exploiting their bridgehead, and there is no evidence of any significant Egyptian penetration into Sinai thus far. The Israeli air force struck eight Egyptian fighter bases early this morning in an attempt to cripple Cairo's fighter force.

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EGYPTIAN FRONT

3. Israeli and Egyptian military spokesmen announced the Egyptian military forces continued to cross the Canal this morning but the Israelis report that little was moved over the six bridges across the canal during the night.

[REDACTED]

4. According to an Israeli assessment given at 1330 local time (1130Z) the Egyptian forces seem to be focusing at Ismailia and north of the city of Suez, which leads to the roads entering the Gidi and Mitla Passes. The Israelis stated that they are now consolidating their own forces along the canal.

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5. According to an Israeli spokesman, the Israeli Air Force struck eight Egyptian air bases with 40 sorties early this morning, including Tanta airfield northwest of Cairo where Libyan Mirages are stationed. An unknown number of Egyptian aircraft were destroyed on the ground and at least four were shot down. Two Israeli Skyhawk fighter-bombers were lost to Egyptian SAMs. Israeli aircraft noted in

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6. Egyptian TU-16 bombers attacked and destroyed the Israeli radar facility at Sharm ash-Shaykh at the tip of the Sinai peninsula today, according to an Israeli spokesman. He also stated that an Egyptian naval force of three boats--including two that carried missiles--and a minelayer attacked Sharm ash-Shaykh, but provided no details on the result of this raid.

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THE SYRIAN FRONT

7. Intense Syrian attacks against Israeli positions on the Golan Heights are continuing. According to an Israeli spokesman this morning, the Syrians broke through Israeli positions at several places and were attempting to envelop Israeli positions in the Quneitra and Rafid areas on the Heights. The Israelis have admitted losing at least one outpost near Quneitra. They stated that Israeli armored units were disengaging at various places to allow their air force to blunt the Syrian attacks.

8. The Israelis acknowledge that the Syrian front is their primary focus of concern for the moment and that they are using most of their air force against the Syrians. Tel Aviv hopes that by noon tomorrow they will be able to launch a major counterattack in the area. The Israelis attribute the Syrian success to boldness, a characteristic that they have not seen exhibited as yet by the Egyptians along the canal. They also report that they have destroyed five Syrian naval combatants without suffering any losses themselves.

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ARAB MILITARY SUPPORT

11. The Arab League secretariat in Cairo has called on all Arab states to implement the league's mutual defense treaty.

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Sudan have made promises of practical support for the battle but their specific contributions have not been announced. No Iraqi ground force movements into Syria have been reported elsewhere. Saudi Arabia has put its air force on alert, including the arming of F5 and Lightning aircraft at Dhahran, but no preparations for involvement have been observed.

TUNISIA

14. President Bourguiba announced today that Tunisia would send troops to the Syrian and Egyptian fronts, but that it would be several days before these contingents reached their destinations. He warned his audience, however, that he would not tolerate a repetition of the June 1967 anti-Jewish, anti-foreign demonstrations.

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MOROCCO

15. King Hassan announced that he is sending another contingent of troops to the Syrian front and would open a registration office in Rabat for Moroccan army personnel and those with previous military service who wished to volunteer.

ALGERIA

16. According to the Algerian news media, President Boumediene has placed the "full resources of the country at the disposition of the Arab front," but the press was not specific. Meanwhile, Algerian coverage of the fighting has been measured and cautious.

SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITY

17. There has been little change reported in Soviet naval deployments since our last Sitrep. By morning of 7 October, all Soviet ships had left Egyptian ports except for one Kashin-class destroyer and some auxiliaries in Alexandria. Most of the Soviet Mediterranean squadron is still located in the vicinity of Crete. One Soviet intelligence collector--probably accompanied by a minesweeper--is located approximately 100 miles off the Syrian-Israeli border. A Kashin-class destroyer apparently has been assigned responsibility for surveillance of the USS Independence task group which left Athens early on 7 October.

18. There is no evidence of unusual Soviet military activity in other areas.

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LATE ITEM

21.

Egyptian military objective is to establish multiple positions along the Bar-Lev line and hold those positions until a ceasefire is arranged. The Egyptians estimate that would take about two days, and that pressure from the "world powers" would enable Cairo to obtain its limited objective of holding a thin strip east of the canal.

25X1

22. The source said that "unquestionably" the Egyptians had attacked first. He said the Soviets were aware of Egyptian plans by early October, but did not know the specific timing. When Sadat asked for full Soviet backing, Moscow refused and began to evacuate technicians and dependents.

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